

EQUIPMENT AND FUEL HAS BEEN ARRANGED.

PAGE:0023

8. THE WEATHER TURNED COLD HERE ON 12 JANUARY. WE HAVE HAD TEMPERATURES DOWN TO THE 50'S WITH LIGHT DRIZZLE. INCOMING PERSONNEL SHOULD BE PREPARED, ESPECIALLY TEAMS ONE AND TWO, WHO WILL BE WORKING IN THE NORTHERN PART OF THE COUNTRY.

9. THE VIETNAMESE HAVE AGREED FOR THE SEARCH TEAMS, GRAVE REGISTRATION SPECIALISTS AND SGT. FLANAGAN (5 PEOPLE) TO REMAIN IN HANOI UNTIL 25 JANUARY IN ORDER TO COMPLETE THEIR JOINT INVESTIGATION REPROTS. WE HAVE RESERVATIONS ON THAI AIRWAYS FOR THE FLIGHT TO BANGKOK.

10. WE HAD TO CONTACT THE TOWER IN VIETNAMESE UPON ARRIVAL DUE TO POOR ENGLISH, LOW CEILING, AND PROBLEMS WITH NAVAI. RECOMMEND YOU HAVE SGT. JANICH AVAILABLE TO TRANSLATE FOR THE CREW ON TOMORROW'S FLIGHT. EVERYTHING IS PROCEEDING SMOOTHLY. BELL WILL MEET THE AIRCRAFT TOMORROW AT NOIBAI AIRPORT.

11. BILL BELL SENDS. ISOM
ADMIN
BT

#0110

NNNN

INQUIRE=DOC7D

ITEM NO=00343372

ENVELOPE

CDSN = LGX018 MCN = 89040/16689 TOR = 890401024
PTTCZYUW RUEKJCS6645 0401023 -RUEALGX.

ZNY

HEADER

P 091023Z FEB 89

FM JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC

INFO RUEALGX/SAFE

~~FM JCRC LIAISON BANGKOK TH~~

FM JCRC LIAISON BANGKOK TH

TO RUHQBPA/CDR JCRC BARBERS PT HI PRIORITY

INFO RUEADWW/WHITEHOUSE WASHDC//NSC// PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC//OASD-ISA/PW-MIA// PRIORITY

RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC//EAP-VLC// PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/JCS WASHDC//OCJCS-PW-MIA/J5// PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/DIA WASHINGTON DC//PW-MIA// PRIORITY

RUHQHQA/USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI//J36// PRIORITY

RUHHMA/CDRUSACILMI FT SHAFTER HI//TAPC-PED-H// PRIORITY

BT

CONTROLS

SECTION 01 OF 04 LIAISON BANGKOK 06645

0080 FEB 89

NSC FOR MR. CHILDRESS

/***** THIS IS A COMBINED MESSAGE *****/

BODY

SUBJ: DETAILED REPORT OF INVESTIGATION OF CASE 1982

REF: JCRC LIAISON 281019Z JAN 89

1. REF WAS THE SUMMARY REPORT OF JOINT US/SRV ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED IN VIETNAM DURING THE PERIOD 14 - 26 JAN 89.

2. SUMMARY OF INVESTIGATION: ON 16 JAN 89 THE JOINT TEAM TRAVELLED TO TRIEU PHUOC VILLAGE, TRIEU HAI DISTRICT, BINH TRI THIEN PROVINCE, WHERE WITNESSES SAID TWO US CREWMEMBERS HAD EJECTED FROM A JET-TYPE AIRCRAFT DURING THE AFTERNOON HOURS ON 27 JAN 73. ONE PILOT CALLED "PHILIP" WAS CAPTURED AND LATER RELEASED. THE SECOND PILOT WAS DEAD WHEN HE LANDED, AND WAS BURIED IN XOM CO HAMLET OF THE VILLAGE. GRAVE ROBBERS HAVE BEEN IN THE AREA SEVERAL TIMES SINCE THE BURIAL, AND THE REMAINS MAY HAVE BEEN RECOVERED ALREADY FROM THE GRAVE BY THESE UNSCRUPULOUS ELEMENTS.

3. DETAILS OF INVESTIGATION:

PAGE:0001

307

308

A. ON 17 JAN 89, THE JOINT US/SRV TEAM CONSISTING OF MR. TRAN VAN TU, TEAM LEADER; MR. GARNETT E. BELL, TEAM LEADER; AND TEAM MEMBERS PHAM CONG KHOI, MR. TRAN TRIEN, CAPT GLENN BORRELLI, SFC WILLIE KATES, AND SFC TOMMY T. BAUGHMAN, TRAVELLED TO TRIEU HAI DISTRICT TOWN (QUANG TRI), BINH TRI THIEN PROVINCE. THE TEAM MET WITH MR. PHAN DINH PHUNG, MEMBER OF THE DISTRICT PEOPLE'S COMMITTEE; SENIOR CAPTAIN DO VAN LANG, REPRESENTATIVE OF THE DISTRICT MILITARY COMMAND HEADQUARTERS; AND MR. DOAN PHONG THUAN, A CADRE OF THE DISTRICT COMMITTEE OFFICE. THE TEAM MEMBERS WERE INTRODUCED AND THE TEAM'S MISSION EXPLAINED. THE TEAM WAS GRANTED PERMISSION TO TRAVEL TO TRIEU PHUOC VILLAGE WHERE U.S. RECORDS INDICATED CASE 1982 HAD OCCURRED.

B. UPON ARRIVAL IN TRIEU PHUOC VILLAGE, THE TEAM MET MR. TRUONG QUOC SENH, A RESIDENT OF THE VILLAGE. MR. SENH SAID HE HAD BEEN ASSIGNED AS THE CHIEF OF THE VILLAGE MILITIA FORCES DURING THE TIME THAT TWO U.S. PILOTS PARACHUTED FROM THEIR AIRCRAFT AND LANDED IN TRIEU PHUOC VILLAGE. MR. SENH SAID THAT ON 27 JAN 73, AT 1530 HOURS, HE SAW ONE U.S. JET-TYPE AIRCRAFT FLYING FROM THE NORTHWEST TOWARD TRIEU PHUOC. MR. SENH SAID THE AIRCRAFT FLEW IN A WIDE ARC AROUND THE EDGE OF THE VILLAGE AND THEN HEADED TOWARD THE SOUTHEAST MR. SENH SAW THE AIRCRAFT HIT BY WHAT HE BELIEVED TO BE 12.7-MM FIRE. THE AIRCRAFT CAUGHT FIRE, AND TWO CREW MEMBERS EJECTED FROM THE AIRCRAFT. THE AIRCRAFT CONTINUED FLYING TOWARD THE SEA AND DESCENDED IN THE DIRECTION OF TRIEU VAN VILLAGE WHICH WAS LOCATED EAST OF TRIEU PHUOC.

C. MR. SENH SAW THE TWO PARACHUTES DESCEND INTO RICE FIELDS BOUNDED BY LUONG KIM (YD327649), XOM CO (YD3165), AND CAO HY HAMLETS (YD 319645). MR. SENH RECALLED THAT THE TWO PARACHUTES LANDED APPROXIMATELY 30 METERS APART. MR. SENH WENT TO OBSERVE THE TWO CREW MEMBERS AND RECALLED THAT THE FIRST PILOT WHO TOUCHED THE GROUND WAS ALREADY DEAD WHEN HE LANDED. THE DEAD PILOT HAD A GUNSHOT WOUND IN HIS RIGHT THIGH WHICH WAS BLEEDING PROFUSELY. MR. SENH SPECULATED THE FIRST PILOT HAD BEEN WOUNDED PRIOR TO EJECTING FROM THE AIRCRAFT AND HAD DIED AS A RESULT OF THE WOUND. MR. SENH RECALLED THE PILOT WAS A CAUCASIAN. HE WAS NOT ABLE TO REMEMBER ANY OTHER PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION. THE BODY OF THE PILOT WAS CARRIED TO XOM CO HAMLET WHERE IT WAS BURIED IN A FIGHTING TRENCH NEAR A LARGE CLUMP OF BAMBOO. THE PERSONAL EFFECTS OF THE PILOT WERE REMOVED FROM HIS BODY AND PLACED IN A BAG PRIOR TO BURIAL. THE PERSONAL EFFECTS WERE THEN TURNED IN TO HIGHER AUTHORITIES IN GIA DO VILLAGE WHICH WAS THE HEADQUARTERS OF TRIEU PHONG

DISTRICT AT THAT TIME. MR. SENH SAID HE BELIEVED THE REMAINS OF THE PILOT WERE STILL BURIED AT THE SPOT WHERE HE BURIED THE PILOT'S BODY DURING JANUARY 1973. MR. SENH SAID HE DID NOT KNOW IF ANYONE HAD DISTURBED THE GRAVE BUT HAD NOT REALLY PAID MUCH ATTENTION TO THE GRAVE OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS.

D. MR. SENH SAID THE SECOND PILOT WAS STILL ALIVE

***** BEGINNING OF SECTION 002 *****/
 WHEN HE LANDED, HE SAID THE SECOND PILOT WAS CAPTURED SHORTLY AFTER HE LANDED IN THE RICE FIELD. AFTER CAPTURING HIM THE MILITIA FORCES ESCORTED THE SECOND PILOT TO CAO HY HAMLET WHERE HE WAS HELD FOR APPROXIMATELY 30 MINUTES AND THEN TAKEN TO TRIEU PHONG DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS, ACCORDING TO MR. SENH. MR. SENH SAID HE DID NOT KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO THE CAPTURED PILOT WHO WAS NAMED "PHILIP." MR. SENH SAID HE WAS NOT ABLE TO PROVIDE ANY FURTHER INFORMATION CONCERNING THE INCIDENT.

E. THE TEAM THEN MET MRS. LAM THI HAI, A RESIDENT OF XOM CO HAMLET. MRS. HAI SAID SHE HAD MOVED TO THE AREA IN 1975 AND WAS THEREFORE NOT PRESENT DURING THE TIME THE INCIDENT OCCURRED. SHE SAID SOMETIME AFTER SHE MOVED TO THE AREA SHE SAW SOME STRANGERS COME TO THE HAMLET AND DIG UP THE SOIL IN FRONT OF THE CLUMP OF BAMBOO. SHE DID NOT SEE ANY REMAINS RECOVERED FROM THE DIGGING. SHE DID NOTICE ONE PAIR OF LEATHER BOOTS LYING ON THE GROUND NEAR THE SPOT WHERE THE DIGGING HAD OCCURRED. SHE DID NOT OBSERVE ANY OTHER PERSONAL EFFECTS. MRS. HAI RECALLED THAT THE SPOT WHERE THE DIGGING HAD OCCURRED HAD BEEN EXCAVATED TO A DEPTH OF APPROXIMATELY 50 CENTIMETERS. MRS. HAI SAID SHE DID NOT KNOW THE NAMES OF ANY OF THE STRANGERS WHO WERE DIGGING IN THE HAMLET. MRS. HAI SAID THE DIGGING HAD OCCURRED DURING DAYLIGHT HOURS. SHE SAID SHE WAS NOT ABLE TO PROVIDE ANY FURTHER INFORMATION.

F. THE TEAM THEN MET WITH MR. NGUYEN NGOC DE. MR. DE SAID HE WAS NOT PRESENT IN THE HAMLET AT THE TIME OF THE INCIDENT. HE SAID SOME YEARS AGO HE HEARD FROM LOCAL VILLAGERS THAT A BODY HAD BEEN BURIED IN A TRENCH NEAR THE BAMBOO CLUMP. HE SAID HE SAW SOME FRESH EARTH NEAR THE CLUMP AND HEARD THAT SOME PEOPLE WHO WERE INTERESTED IN RECOVERING U.S. REMAINS HAD COME DURING THE NIGHT TO EXCAVATE. HE SAID HE HAD NOTICED SIGNS OF DIGGING ON AT LEAST TWO OCCASIONS SEVERAL YEARS AGO. HE SAID HE NEVER SAW ANYONE ACTUALLY DIGGING BECAUSE HE SLEPT AT NIGHT AND WENT TO WORK DURING THE DAYTIME. HE SAID THE PEOPLE WHO WERE DOING THE DIGGING HAD RECOVERED

THE HOLE EACH TIME, AND HE WAS ONLY ABLE TO TELL THE DIGGING HAD OCCURRED BY THE FRESH EARTH HE SAW NEAR THE SPOT. HE SAID HE DID NOT OBSERVE ANY REMAINS. HE SAID HE WAS NOT ABLE TO PROVIDE ANY FURTHER INFORMATION REGARDING THE INCIDENT. THE TEAM THEN RETURNED TO DONG HA.

4. MATERIAL EVIDENCE: NONE

5. SURVEY RESULTS: THE SITE WAS ACCESSED BY VEHICLES ALONG A SERIES OF NARROW, MUDDY DIKES. THE ROUTE TO THE PURPORTED GRAVE SITE LOCATION WAS SCATTERED WITH ABANDONED CONCRETE BUNKERS. THE GENERAL AREA WAS A MASS OF RICE PADDIES. THE LAST SEVERAL HUNDRED METERS WERE TRAVELED BY FOOT ALONG A DIKE WHICH WAS BARELY A FOOT WIDE. THE RECENT CONSTANT RAINS AND LARGE CROWDS OF CURIOUS VILLAGERS WHO FOLLOWED THE TEAM MADE NAVIGATION BACK OUT OF THE AREA VERY DIFFICULT. UPON COMPLETION OF THE ON-SITE INTERVIEWS, THE LOCATION OF THE GRAVE SITE WAS POINTED OUT AS A BAMBOO GROVE LOCATED ADJACENT TO A BANANA GARDEN. THE SITE WAS DESCRIBED AS AN OLD FIGHTING TRENCH WHERE ONE CREWMEMBER WAS BURIED AT THE TIME OF THE INCIDENT. THERE WAS NO INDICATION OF ANY EXISTING GRAVE SITE OBSERVED BY THE TEAM. BASED ON TESTIMONY FROM WITNESSES INDICATING THAT STRANGERS HAD BEEN IN THE AREA DIGGING FOR REMAINS ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS AND THE DENSE POPULATION OF THE VILLAGE, THE PROBABILITY OF "GRAVE ROBBING" IS VERY HIGH.

6. RECOMMENDED FUTURE ACTIONS: REVISIT THE AREA TO RECEIVE THE RESULTS OF THE EXPANDED INVESTIGATION REQUESTED BY THE JOINT TEAM AT THE TIME OF THE TEAM'S VISIT. IF WITNESSES CAN BE LOCATED WHO PROVIDE INFORMATION CONCERNING THE RECOVERY AND REMOVAL FROM THE AREA OF THE PILOT'S REMAINS, THEN ATTEMPT TO DETERMINE THE PRESENT STATUS OF THE REMAINS. IF NO CONCRETE INFORMATION CAN BE DEVELOPED INDICATING THE ORIGINAL GRAVE SITE HAS BEEN RENDERED CLEAR OF REMAINS, THEN CONSIDER EXCAVATING THE GRAVE SITE BY USING A SMALL TEAM WITH LOCAL LABOR.

7. PERTINENT LOCATION OR DATA CHANGES: NONE

/***** BEGINNING OF SECTION 003 *****/

8. AREAS OR CASE FILE INFORMATION NOT INVESTIGATED: NONE

9. ANALYST COMMENTS: THE TIME, DATE, LOCATION, NUMBER AND BASIC DESCRIPTION OF CREWMEMBERS INVOLVED, INCLUDING THE NAME "PHILIP," AS WELL AS OTHER INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THE WITNESS, CORRELATE WELL WITH

THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN US FILES.

10. SEARCH AND RECOVERY SPECIALIST'S COMMENTS: THE PURPORTED GRAVE SITE IS LOCATED IN AN AREA WHICH IS CONSTANTLY CULTIVATED FOR BOTH BUILDING MATERIALS (BAMBOO) AND FRUIT (BANANA). THIS HAS RESULTED IN A CONTINUOUS TURNING OF THE TOP SOIL. THERE WAS NO EVIDENCE OF ANY REMAINS, PERSONAL EFFECTS, OR WRECKAGE. BASED ON THE ADMISSIONS OF ATTEMPTED EXHUMATION, THIS SITE IS NOT RECOMMENDED FOR RECOVERY ACTION.

11. TEAM CHIEF'S COMMENTS:

A. THE TEAM CHIEF AGREES WITH THE TEAM ANALYST AND SEARCH AND RECOVERY SPECIALIST THAT THE INFORMATION RECEIVED ON SITE MATCHES THAT IN US RECORDS, BUT THE REMAINS MAY WELL HAVE BEEN RECOVERED PRIOR TO THE TEAM'S VISIT.

B. SUBSEQUENT TO VISITING THE SITE, THE TEAM CHIEF ASKED FOR A MEETING WITH THE HUE CITY PUBLIC SECURITY OFFICE IN ORDER TO INQUIRE WHETHER ANY US REMAINS HAD BEEN RECOVERED FROM REMAINS TRADERS IN THE GENERAL AREA. THE TEAM CHIEF REMINDED THE VIETNAMESE TEAM LEADER, MR. TRAN VAN TU THAT MR. TU HAD AT ONE POINT MENTIONED THAT A REMAINS TRADER WITH ONE ALLEGED US REMAINS IN HIS POSSESSION HAD BEEN ARRESTED BY THE PUBLIC SECURITY FORCES IN HUE JUST PRIOR TO AN ATTEMPTED BOAT ESCAPE. MR. TU SAID THE REMAINS HAD ALREADY BEEN RECOVERED AND DETERMINED TO HAVE BEEN MONGOLOID. HE COULD NOT ARRANGE FOR THE TEAM CHIEF TO MEET WITH THE PUBLIC SECURITY OFFICE RESPONSIBLE FOR SUCH MATTERS.

C. WHILE IN HUE CITY IN CONJUNCTION WITH ANOTHER PRIMARY CASE, THE TEAM CHIEF ASKED TO STOP AT 10 TONG DUY TAN STREET WHERE HE HAD HEARD A LOCAL RESIDENT HAD RECOVERED SOME ALLEGED US REMAINS IN THE AREA BETWEEN QUANG TRI AND HUE CITY. WHEN THE TEAM CHIEF, ACCOMPANIED BY MR. TU, MR. TRIEN, AND MR. DUONG WENT TO THE HOUSE AND ASKED FOR MR. BUI TU KIEN, THE OWNER SAID THERE WAS NO ONE THERE BY THAT NAME. THE OWNER SAID THERE WAS A MR. "BUI TU THAT" WHO RESIDED NEXT DOOR. THE TEAM CHIEF WENT NEXT DOOR, AND A LADY THERE SAID HER HUSBAND, BUI TU THAT WAS AWAY FOR A FEW DAYS, AND SHE DID NOT HAVE ANY KNOWLEDGE OF ANY US REMAINS. SHE ADDED THAT IT SEEMED STRANGE HOWEVER, BECAUSE APPROX ONE YEAR AGO SHE HAD RECEIVED A LETTER ADDRESSED TO BUI TU KIEN FROM THE PEOPLE WHO RESIDED AT 10 TONG DUY TAN STREET NEXT DOOR. THE TEAM CHIEF LEFT A BUSINESS CARD, AND THE LADY PROMISED TO NOTIFY THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES IF SHE BECAME AWARE OF ANY US REMAINS.

D. THE TEAM PASSED THROUGH TRIEU HAI DISTRICT ENROUTE BACK TO DONG HOI ON 19 JAN 89. THE TEAM CHIEF REQUESTED TO MEET WITH DISTRICT OFFICIALS CONCERNING THE LOCATION OF THE REMAINS OF 1982 BURIED INITIALLY IN XOM CO HAMLET. THE TEAM CHIEF THEN ASKED THE DISTRICT OFFICIALS TO ATTEMPT TO LOCATE A MR. "BA" IN GIA DO HAMLET (YD2763) WHERE THE TEAM CHIEF HAD HEARD TWO ALLEGED US REMAINS HAD BEEN RECOVERED FROM A GRAVE UNDER THE FLOOR OF A HOUSE AND REBURIED IN A CEMETERY NEAR THE GIA DO FERRY CROSSING. THE TEAM CHIEF ALSO ASKED THE OFFICIALS TO ATTEMPT TO LOCATE A MR. "LE TAN" IN XUAN THANH VILLAGE (YD2864) WHERE THE TEAM CHIEF HAD HEARD TWO US REMAINS WERE HIDDEN IN HIS HOME DURING 1972, ALONG WITH A SKULL FOUND ON A SANDBAR AT YD2966. THE OFFICIALS WERE ALSO ASKED TO CHECK OUT A REPORT OF A GRAVE WITH ONE ALLEGED US REMAINS IN THE AREA OF YD2174. THE OFFICIALS WERE ALSO INFORMED THAT THE TWO REMAINS SAID TO BE IN THE POSSESSION OF MR. LE TAN MAY BE ASSOCIATED WITH AN ABANDONED TANK IN XUAN THANH VILLAGE. THE TEAM CHIEF ALSO REQUESTED THE OFFICIALS INVESTIGATE A REPORT THAT TWO ALLEGED US REMAINS HAD BEEN EXHUMED FROM A GRAVE IN MY THUY (YD4856) AND MOVED TO THON TAN DIEN (YD4438) DURING 1983. (NOTE: THIS INFORMATION WAS

/***** BEGINNING OF SECTION 004 *****/

EXTRACTED FROM UNCORRELATED REPORTS S.D.

S.D. THE TEAM CHIEF INFORMED THE OFFICIALS HE WAS ESPECIALLY INTERESTED IN HEARING ABOUT THE REMAINS REPORTEDLY HIDDEN UNDER THE FLOOR OF A HOUSE IN GIA DO SINCE THE OFFICIALS HAD JUST DESCRIBED GIA DO AS THE FORMER COMMUNIST ADMINISTRATIVE HEADQUARTERS FOR TRIEU PHONG DISTRICT DURING THE WAR YEARS (NOTE: FORMER TRIEU PHONG AND HAI LANG DISTRICTS HAVE NOW BEEN INCORPORATED AS TRIEU HAI). THE OFFICIALS ASKED FOR THE SOURCE'S OF THE ABOVE INFORMATION, BUT THE TEAM CHIEF DECLINED, CITING REASONS OF CONFIDENTIALITY. THE TEAM CHIEF ADDED THAT HE COULD NOT GUARANTEE THE ACCURACY OR VERACITY OF ANY OF THE REPORTS BUT WAS PROVIDING THESE LEADS IN GOOD FAITH IN ORDER TO CONDUCT A THOROUGH INVESTIGATION OF THE REFNO 1982 CASE. THE DISTRICT OFFICIALS PROMISED THEY WOULD CHECK OUT THE REPORTS AND PROVIDE A RESPONSE DURING THE NEXT JOINT EFFORT.

E. THE TEAM CHIEF WAS WORKING FROM HAND-WRITTEN NOTES IN A POCKET NOTEBOOK, AND ONE REPORT NOT RESEARCHED THOROUGHLY PRIOR TO BEGINNING THE INVESTIGATION WAS S.D. IT MIGHT BE PRODUCTIVE IN ANY FUTURE VISIT TO INQUIRE CONCERNING THE WHEREABOUTS OF THE TWO PEOPLE MENTIONED IN THIS REPORT IN ORDER TO

DETERMINE ITS ACCURACY. IN ANY CASE, IT WILL BE INTERESTING TO SEE WHAT THE VIETNAMESE RESPONSE IS TO THE TEAM CHIEF'S REQUEST. HOPEFULLY, THE VIETNAMESE WILL UNDERSTAND THAT ONLY BY COOPERATING IN SUCH A MANNER CAN A THOROUGH INVESTIGATION OF THIS TYPE OF CASE BE CONDUCTED.

ADMIN

BT

#6645

NNNN